

BPA Questions and Answers

The following are questions received in past solicitation cycles. Thereafter, questions will post with a specific date as received from the offerors and responded to by the U.S. Probation Office. Offerors should consult this list of questions/answers prior to submitting their proposals. All questions must be submitted via e-mail (Daniel_Macke@moep.uscourts.gov) by 12:00 p.m., Thursday, July 13, 2023, and all questions will be posted/answered by Friday, July 14, 2023 at 5:00 p.m., with final proposals due by 12:00 p.m. on Monday, July 17, 2023.

Q: Where can I find the Request for Proposals (RFP's) that are open for bid?

A: All available RFP's are posted to www.moep.uscourts.gov under Probation, Treatment Services. The RFPs are listed by service types and catchment areas. Specific project codes are listed within each RFP.

Q: This is my first time submitting an RFP. Where do I start?

A: It is important to start by reading the entire solicitation document. Section B indicates the specific project codes for each agreement. Note, the vendor must be capable of providing or subcontracting all required services. Section C is the actual Statement of Work that provides specifics for each of the project codes, as well as other information regarding the deliverable, non-compliance, staff requirements/restrictions, etc. Section C also include any local services which provide further descriptors/requirements to specified project codes (there are indicated by an * in Section B next to the project code). The offeror must be able to comply with the local service requirements.

Most importantly, SECTION L provides the offeror instructions for the proposals, and the offeror should pay careful attention to the instructions and requirements for proposal submission. Section M includes the Evaluation Factors for Award.

Q: I am unable to provide all the project code services listed. Am I disqualified to submit a proposal?

A: A vendor must be capable of providing all services identified in Section "B," including local services identified at the end of Section C, and within the geographic area identified in Section "B." However, in accordance with Section I, a vendor can team with another agency in an effort to ensure the ability to provide all services requested in the Statement of Work

NOTE: In Section L, Submission of Prices, "The offeror must provide a response to every requested service item," and Section L A (3)(c) requires the vendor to insert the letter "S" following the price inserted in Section B for all subcontracted services.

Q: I am interested in providing services under multiple BPAs. Do I need to submit a separate proposal, or can I indicate the BPAs of interest in a cover letter?

A: The vendor must submit a completed RFP for each BPA in which the vendor is interested. Each RFP references a specific catchment area. If the vendor has a site in more than one catchment area, the vendor must respond and submit a completed RFP packet for each appropriate corresponding BPA number in which that vendor is interested in providing services. Submission of proposals should be specific to the particular BPA.

Q: Since I am uncertain as to whether I will be awarded the agreement, do I need to have operational space at the time I submit the proposal, or can I enter a lease post award?

A: Yes. According to Section M - Evaluation Factors for Award, on-sites will be conducted for those offeror's whose proposals are determined technically acceptable based on the criteria and meet the lowest price requirement. Therefore, the offeror must have a site within the catchment area at the time of proposal submission.

Q: Some of the catchment areas list multiple counties or multiple zip codes. Is the offeror required to have a site in each listed area?

A: No, the offeror is not required to have a site within every county or zip code located within the identified catchment area (e.g. if the catchment area includes counties A, B, and C, and the offeror only has a site in county C, that would meet the requirements; the same is true if the catchment area includes multiples zip codes, the offeror must have a site within one of the zip codes listed in order to meet the requirements). However, the offeror must have a least one site located within the catchment area (see Section L).

- Q: What is involved with urinalysis collection (project code 1010)?
A: The vendor must have male and female staff available for direct observation on the date and specific hours of each scheduled urine collection. The vendor can only perform same gender observed collection. Unobserved collection should occur only in rare circumstances, and the designated U.S. Probation Office contact should be notified in those instances. Only those collectors trained by the U.S. Probation Office are permitted to collect specimens under the agreement. A day prior to each collection day, the U.S. Probation Office will e-mail the vendor a pdf document containing the Chain of Custody forms for each defendant/person under supervision required to submit a urine specimen on that date, as well as a listing of those scheduled for testing. The vendor is responsible for printing the Chain of Custody forms on the special COC paper provided by the U.S. Probation Office and following the training procedures for the proper completion of the Chain of Custody form and observed urine collection. The U.S. Probation Office will provide the vendor with the necessary urinalysis collection materials (i.e. blank Chain of Custody forms, vials, specimen bags, mailing boxes, and mailing labels which include the cost of shipping); however, the vendor is responsible for printer ink, gloves, cleaning agents, etc. Once the vendor collects the urine specimens, the vendor will either mail via U.S. Postal Service (postage paid by U.S. Probation Office via special mailing labels) or hand deliver the specimens to the U.S. Probation Office in St. Louis where the in-house laboratory will test the specimens. Please see Statement of Work for additional requirements for urinalysis collection.
- Q: Does the vendor have to maintain a call-in phone system for the urine collection?
A: No. The U.S. Probation Office maintains a phone number and texting system for the urine collection schedule. It is the responsibility of the person under supervision to call the phone line each day to ascertain whether they are required to report to the vendor to submit a urine specimen. If the person under supervision has a valid cell phone number, they will also receive text notification at 7 p.m. on the day prior to the scheduled urine collection.
- Q: Will the vendor know in advance on what days urine collection will occur?
A: Yes. The U.S. Probation Office will consult with the vendor each month in the scheduling of agreeable dates for urinalysis collection. The vendor must have days available in accordance with the local need specified in the Statement of Work. The ultimate discretion for the testing days remains with the U.S. Probation Office. The vendor must communicate a urine collection schedule with the U.S. Probation Office prior to the 23rd of each month.
- Q: What is a sweat patch (project code 1012)?
A: A patch worn on the skin used to detect the presence of drugs excreted through the body. The patch may detect drug use up to two days prior to application and is generally worn for seven to ten days. There is a website (www.pharmchek.com) the vendor can access for sweat patch training and completion of the certification test. Only those with the certification are approved to apply the sweat patch.
- Q: What is the Department of Labor Wage determination?
A: The Department of Labor Wage determination only applies to those BPAs that include project code 1010 or 1012 in Section B. Additional information regarding the wage determination can be found under the Service Contract Act of 1965, as amended June 2012.
- Q: Will an IRS Form 1099 now be provided verifying income at the end of an approved year?
A: The Clerk's Office will send a 1099-MISC to vendors who are eligible to receive them. The expense must fall in the BOC range 2500-2599 (they provide some kind of contract service) and the Clerk's Office is required to send them only to those vendors who were paid \$600 or more. It also depends on the information provided on the W-9 or AO213 forms. If the vendor indicates on the forms that they are a corporation, then they are claiming to be exempt from a 1099 and the Clerk's Office would not send one.
- Q: Is there a location where we can look at past proposals as an example to make sure we are completing correctly?
A: No, there are no examples to post. Section L of the solicitation document sets forth the instructions on completing a proposal.

Q: Does the vendor receive reimbursement for materials/workbooks provided to defendants/persons under supervision?

A: There is no reimbursement for vendor provided materials/workbooks. The cost of these materials/workbooks should be incorporated into the unit cost.

Q: Under Project Code 1202 – Transportation Expenses – in cases where public transportation is not available, is it the vendor's responsibility to arrange the transportation after getting prior approval?

A: When transportation is authorized by the officer and included on the program plan, it is the vendor's responsibility to provide the transportation expense. Where there is public transportation available, this often include the purchase of daily or monthly bus passes to provide the approved individuals. If public transportation is unavailable, or as otherwise authorized on the program plan, this may include providing gas cards or reimbursement for mileage (amount specified by the probation officer) to the person under supervision. Through the invoice, the vendor is reimbursed the actual cost for 1202, plus a 5% administrative fee under 1201.

Q: What is the expected start date of the new agreement?

A: October 1, 2023.

Question received June 7, 2023

Q: We have a therapist in training (name redacted) and under supervision who sees clients in the program under another provider. We would like to contract for this service. Would our therapist in training (name redacted) be able to be our clinician providing services in this contract even if she is still in supervision?

A: One criteria for an offeror to be technically acceptable is that staff proposed in the Staff Qualification Statement shall meet the requirements as outlined in the Statement of Work. If the offeror does not have staff that meet the qualifications for particular project codes, the offeror would be found technically unacceptable.